



## **Monthly Report for July 2015**

*Submitted August 10, 2015*

### **Staffing**

Interviews for the Network Administrator position are complete and a selection has been made. An offer letter will go out later this week.

### **Meetings**

#### 2015 NCES STATS-DC Data Conference

Several staff members attended the annual *STATS-DC Data Conference* hosted by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The conference provided a lot of good information on relevant topics including managing external data requests, alternative measures for measuring socioeconomic status, and technical presentations on warehouse design and data quality.

#### Senator Edward R. Reilly (District 33, Anne Arundel County)

At the request of Senator Edward Reilly, Ross Goldstein, Laia Tiderman, and Peter Hobbs met with the Senator and two of his staff on July 13<sup>th</sup> to provide an overview about the system development, data collected by the Center and planned research with that data, access to the data by outside researchers and stakeholders, and the Center's budget.

#### Advanced Statistical Workshops

Multiple members of the research team attended advanced statistical workshops, including workshops on hierarchical linear modeling and survival analysis.

### **System Development**

#### Firewall

The Center had begun a procurement to purchase updated firewall and switches. That procurement has been cancelled. Staff learned that the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) has a statewide contract for agencies to use a firewall service. Staff is in the process of discussing the requirements and cost of utilizing the system with DoIT and its vendor Skyline. From the initial investigation, this service solution will be a more cost effective and robust solution for the Center. The Center still needs to procure switches, which is being addressed through a new procurement.

#### Master File Transfer (MFT) System

Staff has completed the installation of the MFT system and relocated all related files and folders from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS). The MFT system is used by the partner agencies for securely transferring their data to MLDS. Staff upgraded the MFT version to include PGP encryption for the files. Staff is also in the process of migrating users and setting up configuration for secure file transfers.

#### SAS® (Statistical Analysis Software)

The installation of SAS server and client software has been completed on the MLDS Server and the researchers' virtual machines. Staff has tested the virtual machines and the method of access to those

machines for the researchers. All staff, including the research team are fully accessing the new data and are out of DPSCS environment.

#### Oracle Software Certification

The Oracle software that was required to be installed under Universal License Agreement (ULA) has been completed and staff also completed the requirements for ULA certification for the Center. This was a lengthy process that required documenting all Oracle software installed on all servers with all CPUs and cores. Staff has been assisting MSDE with their portion of the ULA certification (the same ULA applies to all of the Race to the Top projects).

#### Offsite Backup

Staff is continuing to explore different options for offsite backup. As a temporary solution, a system backup is being maintained at DPSCS.

#### **Data Management**

Enrollment Information System (EIS) and Degree Information System (DIS) data from MHEC has been received and loaded. Staff will be working with data stewards to resolve rejected records. Staff is in the process of loading Student-Course-Grade-Teacher (SCGT) data from MSDE. Staff also loaded the latest adult correctional education and wage data from DLLR. The Center is focused on loading data relevant to reporting the Dual Enrollment Report due December 2015.

As the System now contains data from all three sectors (K12, postsecondary, and workforce) staff continue to work on the best ways to report and present this cross-sectional data to the public.

Staff is also working with partner agencies to revise the Data Collection Calendar for the 2015-2016 academic year. The 2016 Data Collection Calendar will be presented at the September Board Meeting for approval.

#### **Research**

The Research team is continuing to make progress on the following reports:

- Assessing STEM post-graduate student state and regional job acceptance and retention;
- Impacts on students assigned to remedial courses in postsecondary education; and
- College enrollment

The team is also developing recommendations for coding demographics for dashboards and research reports.